



Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory Customer Focus Group Trip to Washington D.C.



Kate Pfennig (left front), Eric Murphy (left back), Ernie Hoffert (right back), Greg Lardy (right front)

On April 28-29, 2003, representatives of the NGPRL Customer Focus Group went to Washington D.C. to visit USDA-ARS and congressional personnel concerning key issues of importance to the NGPRL. They focused on the important work the Laboratory performs to support northern Great Plains farmers and ranchers. They shared information on how proposed legislation would affect the NDSU Hettinger Experiment Station research and UND Aerospace Consortium precision farming research project. They also consistently and succinctly promoted a potential “healthy” branded beef/Omega 3 fatty-acid research project supported by the NGPRL Customer Focus Group. They emphasized this project’s innovative, multi-facility cooperation between the USDA-ARS Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory, North Dakota State University, USDA-ARS Grand Forks Human Nutrition Center, and the University of North Dakota Medical School to develop this significantly impactful “gate-to-plate” research project.

During their stay in Washington D.C., they met with Senator Byron Dorgan (D-ND), Nicole Kroetsch, Legislative Aide to Senator Dorgan, Galen Fountain, Director for the US Senate Ag Appropriations Subcommittee, Timothy Galvin, Senior Analysis Advisor and Tracee Gross, Staff Assistant of Senator Kent Conrad (D-ND), Congressman Earl Pomeroy (D-ND), Aleta Botts, Legislative Director for Congressman Pomeroy, Martha Foley, US House Staff Minority Director, Patricia Raymond, Majority Staff Director for the US Senate Ag Appropriations Subcommittee, Edward Knipling acting USDA-ARS Administrator, Wayne Wolf, USDA-ARS Acting National Program Leader for Human Nutrition, Joseph Garbarino, USDA-ARS Director of Budget & Program Management Staff.

“I feel much honored as a North Dakotan to have been sent to Washington D.C. by the Northern Great Plains Research Laboratory Customer Focus Group. As a native New Zealander, I still find it hard to believe that I was there at all! The jury is still out on our success, but I hope we have helped accomplish the goals of our Customer Focus Group.”

Kate Pfennig